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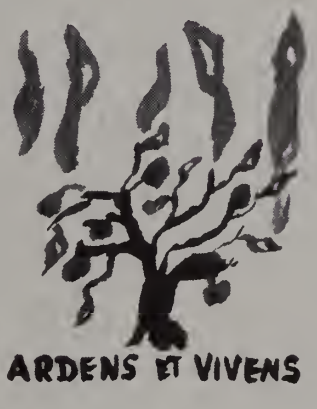

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JOHANNIS CRATO AND THE AUSTRIAN HABSBURGS

Reforming A Counter-Reform Court

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HOWARD LOUTHAN

PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

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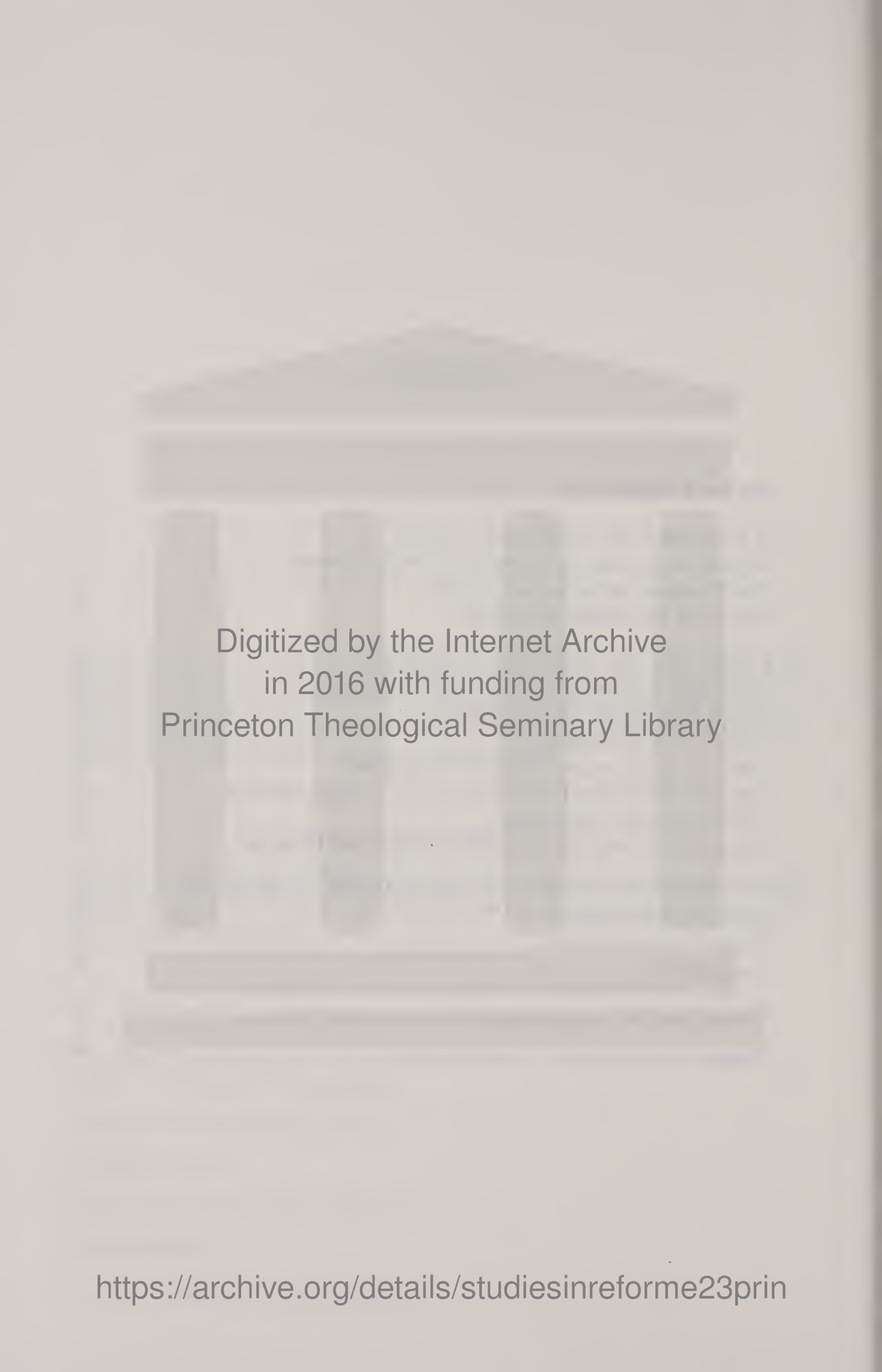

Editor's Foreword

The study of cultural and diplomatic developments in central Europe brings its special rewards to match its special challenges. This is true also of ecclesiastical and theological developments in that area in the sixteenth century. There was a relative fluidity among groups which elsewhere had already been more firmly defined and somewhat stabilized. There was, among other things, the constant need to take into account the presence of the Ottoman Empire which had a way of exerting pressure for some greater measure of cooperation among its opponents. The Austrian Habsburgs, not later famous for friendliness toward Protestant movements, at interesting junctures of their history nurtured, for a diversity of motivations, expressions of theologically and philosophically committed irenicism. That form of irenicism merits even more attention than it has received in recent years.

Howard Louthan's study makes a contribution in calling attention to this neglected chapter in central European history and in an irenic Calvinism, by focusing on the figure of Johannis Crato. Professor Louthen did his doctoral studies in the History Department, Princeton University, and teaches at The University of Notre Dame.

David Willis-Watkins

I

A Calvinist in a Catholic Court

Central Europe and the Growth of Confessionalism

For historians of central Europe the second half of the sixteenth century has often been overlooked terrain.[1] The dramatic events of the first half of the century overshadow imperial developments after the deaths of Luther and Melanchthon. The study of the Renaissance and Reformation in the German lands is a well-established industry,[2] but far less attention has been paid to what historians have dubbed the Confessional Age.[3] At first glance this appellation seems most appropriate for this period. The Counter-Reformation gained

[1] In this context see James Kittelson's comments concerning humanism and the Reformation in central Europe. James Kittelson, "Humanism in the Theological Faculties of Lutheran Universities during the Late Reformation" in *The Harvest of Humanism in Central Europe*, Manfred Fleischer, ed. (St. Louis, 1992), 139.

[2] Illustrative of this point is the historiographical contrast between the German Peasants' Revolt of 1525 and the Schmalkaldic War (1546–1547). Monographs on the former well outnumber those examining the latter even though the Schmalkaldic War may well have been the more significant event. The best introduction to the Peasants' War of 1525 is Peter Blickle's *The Revolution of 1525* (Baltimore, 1981). Blickle's book was translated into English by Thomas Brady and Erik Midelfort four years after its original publication in German. In contrast, no major study of the Schmalkaldic War exists in English. For this subject see Fritz Hartung, *Karl V. und die deutschen Reichsstände von 1546–1555* (Darmstadt, 1971).

[3] Of particular importance is E.W. Zeeden's book, *Konfessionsbildung: Studien zur Reformation, Gegenreformation und katholischen Reform* (Stuttgart, 1985). Also important in this respect is the work of Heinz Schilling, "Die Konfessionalisierung im Reich. Religiöser und gesellschaftlicher Wandel in Deutschland zwischen 1555 und 1620," *Historische Zeitschrift* 246 (1988): 1–45 and Wolfgang Reinhard, "Konfession und Konfessionalisierung in Europa" in *Bekenntnis und Geschichte*, W. Reinhard, ed. (Munich, 1981), 165–189. R. Po-Chia Hsia offers an English summary of this historiographical discussion in *Social Discipline in the Reformation: Central Europe 1550–1750* (New York, 1989). Marc Forster's *The Counter-Reformation in the Villages: Religion and Reform in the Bishopric of Speyer* (Ithaca, 1992) studies confessionalism on the local level and poses a provocative challenge to traditional studies of the Counter-Reformation.

critical momentum during these fifty years. The on-again, off-again Council of Trent was finally concluded in 1563. Under the leadership of Peter Canisius the Jesuits made substantial inroads in central Europe. The Wittelsbachs of Bavaria unwaveringly rejected the Reformation and pursued an enthusiastic program of Catholic reform. Protestantism was decisively defeated in Cologne after the flight of its apostate archbishop, Gebhard Truchsess von Waldburg.

At the same time, the Lutheran community went through its own process of radicalization. The tireless efforts of the fierce Croat Flacius Illyricus eventually bore fruit.[4] In 1574 the moderate followers of Philip Melanchthon were expelled from Saxony. A more dogmatic form of Lutheranism took root. With the adoption of the Book of Concord in 1580 the divide between Lutheranism and the wider European Protestant community was deepened.[5] The third of these confessional groups, the Calvinists, also made substantial gains in the latter half of the sixteenth century. Elector Frederick III of the Palatinate adopted their creed, and the margrave of Brandenburg would eventually embrace the Reformed faith in 1613. In many ways the Calvinists were the most dangerous of the Protestant churches, for their ideology coincided with an aggressive foreign policy.[6] Considered together, the division of central Europe into three inflexible and hostile religious factions contributed to the overall destabilization of the region.

In the second half of the sixteenth century the nominal center of central Europe was Vienna, the residence of the Holy Roman Emperor. During this period the imperial court became an important focal point of the Counter-Reformation. The Protestant storm of the early sixteenth century had destroyed the religious unity of the empire. Political fragmentation quickly followed. After adopting a new faith, various Protestant princes dissolved their old allegiance to the emperor. Charles V (1519–1556) spent his latter days in Germany in an attempt to crush this spirit of rebellion. The Schmalkaldic War (1546–1547) was one of many brushfires of Protestant revolt the emperor struggled to extinguish. He believed the only way to restore the power and prestige of the Reich was through a uniform reimposition of Catholicism.

Leading a wandering court across his wide domains, Charles contrasted strongly with his successor, his brother Ferdinand I (1558–1564). Ferdinand

[4] For Illyricus, see Oliver Olson's essay in *Shapers of Religious Traditions in Germany, Switzerland and Poland, 1560–1600*, Jill Raitt, ed. (New Haven, 1981), 1–17.

[5] For the significance of the Book of Concord see *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 8 (1977). Though the contributors to this volume salute the Book of Concord as an important document ending the cleavages within the Lutheran community, they do not discuss its effect terminating the dialog with Calvinist Europe.

[6] In general for the impact of Calvinism in this period see the fine collection of essays, *International Calvinism 1541–1715*, Menna Prestwich, ed. (Oxford, 1985).

established the court in Vienna as his permanent residence. Though more moderate in temperament than Charles, he continued to support the growth of the Catholic reform movement. He invited the first Jesuits to Vienna.[7] He also appointed a new archbishop of Prague, a position that had gone unfulfilled since the beginning of the Hussite period. Under Ferdinand's leadership, a number of prominent Austrian families converted back to Catholicism. The support of these nobles provided the framework for substantial Catholic gains in the future.[8]

Ferdinand's heir, Maximilian II (1564–1576), is a difficult person to characterize. Though Counter-Reform projects continued during his reign, Maximilian was far more ambivalent concerning his own religious sentiments. His family feared that he would openly convert to Lutheranism. In a 1560 conversation with Bishop Stanislaus Hosius he asserted that he considered himself neither a Protestant nor a Catholic but a Christian.[9] In 1562 his worried family did extract a promise that he would remain true to the Catholic faith.[10] Externally, Maximilian honored this pledge. He never broke with Rome. Internally, however, the emperor kept his religious convictions tightly guarded. Maximilian repudiated the policy of his uncle Charles V, the restoration of Catholicism by force. He believed the unity of the Empire could be recovered in a more peaceable fashion. Even as the Counter-Reformation gained momentum, Maximilian's court attracted those who advocated policies of reconciliation and not confrontation between Protestants and Catholics.

This study will examine the work of one of these conciliatory reformers active at the Viennese court, Maximilian's personal physician Johannis Crato. The first part of the investigation will explore the background of this prominent Protestant leader. We will pay specific attention to the development of his irenic theological convictions which made him acceptable to a nominally Catholic court. The second part will examine Crato's work as a mediator in a Catholic context for the Protestant community. His intercessory efforts on behalf of a small Bohemian sect are illustrative of the moderate religious temper that reached its climax during Maximilian's reign. The third and concluding sec-

[7] For the Jesuit mission in the imperial lands see Bernhard Duhr, *Die Jesuiten an den deutschen Fürstenhöfen* (Freiburg, 1901). More general on the Jesuit ministry is John O'Malley's magisterial new study *The First Jesuits* (Cambridge, 1993).

[8] Most important is the case of the Spanish ambassador and close imperial adviser, Adam Dietrichstein. See Friedrich Edelmayer, "Ehre, Geld, Karriere. Adam von Dietrichstein im Dienst Kaiser Maximilians II" in *Kaiser Maximilian II. Kultur und Politik im 16. Jahrhundert*, F. Edelmayer and A. Kohler, eds. (Vienna, 1992), 109–142.

[9] Viktor Bibl, *Maximilian II, der rätselhafte Kaiser* (Hellerau bei Dresden, 1929), 98.

[10] Eduard Reimann, "Die religiöse Entwicklung Maxmilians II in den Jahren 1554–1564," *Historische Zeitschrift* 15 (1866): 58–59.

tion will consider the reasons behind the ultimate failure of irenicism at the Hapsburg court. The ideals of conciliation and compromise could not be maintained in an increasingly hostile environment.

The Education of an Irenic Calvinist

The case of Johannis Crato is particularly intriguing when one considers the circumstances surrounding his appointment. Besides Crato there were other Protestants who infiltrated the imperial circle and held important positions at court, but these religious interlopers could usually be classified in one of two categories. A radical Protestant could be selected for a court position, but when the error was discovered, it would be rectified with a prompt dismissal.[11] In the second instance, Protestants who were called to court could maintain their post by disguising or de-emphasizing their confessional sympathies.[12] Johannis Crato, however, did not fall into either of these two categories. Crato, in fact, had one of the finest Protestant pedigrees in central Europe. He had studied in Wittenberg with Martin Luther and his successor Philip Melanchthon. Crato corresponded regularly with Joachim Camerarius in Leipzig, Zacharias Ursinus in Heidelberg and Theodore Beza in Geneva.[13] After his retirement from the imperial court he returned to his Silesian estate and started the region's first Reformed church.[14] While in Vienna, Crato did not hide his Protestant background. Those at court knew his religious convictions. Considering these circumstances, then, it appears difficult to account for his presence in this Catholic context. We will see, however, that though Crato was a committed Protestant, his mild and conciliatory spirit ideally fit the general mood of Maximilian's court.

Crato's Silesian background was an important factor in the development of his irenic temperament. His family had lived in Breslau, Silesia's most important city, for over two centuries.[15] The doctor described his forebears as

[11] This was the case with Maximilian's early tutor Wolfgang Schiefer. Schiefer had instructed the young prince at Innsbruck between 1536 and 1538 before it was discovered that he had studied at Wittenberg and was a close friend of Martin Luther. J.G. Schelhorn, *Ergötzlichkeiten* (Leipzig, 1762), 89–94. Also see the example of Sebastian Pfauser, 14, 15.

[12] The Dutch librarian, Hugo Blotius, should be considered in this context. For Blotius see Leendert Brummel, *Twee Ballingen's Lands Tijden Onze Opstand Tegen Spanje* (The Hague, 1972).

[13] For selections from Crato's correspondence with Camerarius, Ursinus, Beza, et al., see J.F.A. Gillet, *Crato von Crafftheim und seine Freunde* (Frankfurt, 1860), 2:453–555.

[14] Gillet, 2:252.

[15] Manfred Fleischer, *Späthumanismus in Schlesien* (Munich, 1984), 257. Silesia had become a possession of the Bohemian crown in 1335. The prolific Piast family had divided this territory among themselves, and by the end of the fifteenth century Silesia was a complicated patchwork of sixteen principalities. It came under Hapsburg rule when Ferdinand ascended the throne of St. Wenceslaus in 1526.

pious and honest people who "had dwelt in close intimacy most peacefully with others."[16] Breslau's very existence and prosperity depended on this goodwill between peoples. This trade city on the Oder was located on the crossroads of central Europe. The road from Kiev and Cracow ran through Breslau and on to the Bohemian and German towns of the west. From the north, goods from the Baltic moved south through this thriving entrepôt to Hungary.[17] Along with trade came a stimulating exchange of ideas which enriched the cultural life of the region.[18]

Breslau's leading humanists introduced the Reformation to the city. Johann Hess and Ambrosius Moiban established a moderate Lutheran reform that superseded the more radical currents of Schwenkfeldianism.[19] Hess helped send many young students to Wittenberg, including Crato.[20] The warm relationship between Hess and Melanchthon contributed to the mild character of the Reformation in Breslau.[21] In 1552 Melanchthon wrote Adam Cureus praising the city:

> I give thanks to the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ with my whole heart, because he has so governed the church in the famous city of Breslau that no doctrinal dissensions have disturbed the worship of the pious for thirty years. There was never any church in Germany more tranquil.[22]

[16] *Johannis Cratonis à Kraftheim Consiliorum et Epistolarum Medicinalium Liber Quartus*, L. Scholz, ed. (Frankfurt, 1671), 4:424. Crato's father was a simple craftsman.

[17] Georg Kretschmar, ed., *Die Reformation in Breslau, Quellenhefte zur Ostdeutschen und Osteuropäischen Kirchengeschichte* 3/4 (1960), 7.

[18] The praise Johannes Caselius lavished on the city was typical of this period. See Caselius's *Memoriae et Honori Nobilissimorum, Clarissimorumq Virorum: Thomae Redigeri, Joannis Cratonis, Jacobi Monavii* (Breslau, 1607), especially A2r. Melchior Adam, an early biographer of German doctors, praised Breslau in similar terms writing, "Vratislavia, metropolis Silesiae: cuius Respub. non tam amplitudine, splendore, & opibus; quam artium literarumque scientia cum optimis & moratissimis quibusque civitatibus in orbe Christiano certat." Melchior Adam, *Vitae Germanorum Medicorum* (Heidelberg, 1620), 261.

[19] Fleischer, *Späthumanismus in Schlesien* 247. Kaspar Schwenkfeld was from nearby Ossig in Lower Silesia.

[20] Between 1538 and 1559 an average of thirty Silesians studied in Wittenberg each semester. In 1558 the number grew to eighty, more than ten percent of the entire student body. Gillet, 1:16.

[21] Gerhard Eberlein, "Melanchthon und seine Beziehungen zu Schlesien," *Correspondenzblatt* 6 (1898): 76–101.

[22] Melanchthon to Cureus, October 1552, *Corpus Reformatorum*, G. Bretschneider, ed., vol. 7 (Halle, 1840), 19. Melanchthon also praised the learning and erudition of this region's humanists. In a 1558 foreword to Valentin Trotzendorf's *Catechesis*, he boasted that no other part of Germany could claim as many scholars as Silesia. Manfred Fleischer, "Wesen und Wirken der späthumanistischen Gelehrtenrepublik in Schlesien," *Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte* 35 (1983): 327.

The Lutheran faith and humanism grew side by side in Breslau.[23] The Melanchthonian ideal of *pietas eloquens* found fertile ground in the city. Its leading families, the Rhedigers, Monaus, and Cratos, combined learning with piety.[24] The cross-pollenation of humanism and Lutheranism produced remarkable results in Silesia during the second half of the sixteenth century. Great strides were taken in the fields of medicine, agriculture, botany, zoology and mineralogy.[25] Confessional tensions were low as Silesians worked toward accommodation and compromise.[26] The Erasmian tradition of Breslau has led some historians to conclude that by 1600 this Silesian city, not Prague, was the most important center of Christian humanism in the Bohemian kingdom.[27]

Born in 1519, Johannis Crato was a representative figure of Breslau's late-humanist culture. His own education illustrated the close links that had developed between theology, the arts, and medicine.[28] Crato's formal education had begun in Breslau at the Elizabeth school. There he excelled academically and in 1534 was granted a scholarship by the city council to study at Wittenberg where he would work with Luther and Melanchthon. To accommodate the young pupil, Luther actually had a room added to his house.[29] Concerning his relationship with Luther, Crato noted, "Since I was part of his house-

[23] Concerning the interaction of humanism and Lutheranism see Manfred Fleischer, "The Institutionalization of Humanism in Protestant Silesia," *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 66 (1975): 256–274.

[24] Kretschmar, 7. For the Rhedigers, see Ludwig Wachler, *Thomas Rehdiger und seiner Büchersammlung in Breslau* (Breslau, 1828) and Hans Jürgen v. Witzendorff-Rehdiger, "Die Rehdiger in Breslau," *Jahrbuch der Schlesischen Friedrich-Wilhelms-Üniversität zu Breslau* 2 (1957): 93–106. For the Monaus, see Theodor Wotschke, "Aus Jakob Monaus Briefwechsel mit Beza," *Correspondenzblatt des Vereins für Geschichte der evangelischen Kirche Schlesiens* 16 (1919): 314–348.

[25] Fleischer, *Späthumanismus in Schlesien*, 12–19.

[26] Concerning Silesia, Walter Schimmel-Falkenau comments, "Im Gegensatz zum Reich, wo sich Katholizismus und Protestantismus heftig mit Worten befehdeten, ging in Schlesien die Auseinandersetzung zwischen den beiden Bekenntnissen lebhafte Stetgespräche im Gang waren. Beide Konfessionen lebten hier nahe zu friedlich neben und miteinander." W. Schimmel-Falkenau, *Breslau* (Frankfurt, 1960), 50. Herbert Schöffler described the early-modern Silesian in the following terms, "Der lutherische Mensch mit dem katholischen Anregungen der Heimat durchläuft einen calvinistischen Studiengang." H. Schöffler, *Deutsches Geistesleben zwischen Reformation und Aufklärung* (Frankfurt, 1956), 68–69.

Joachim Konrad coined the phrase "Schlesische Toleranz" to describe the religious mood of this region in both the early modern and modern periods. Joachim Konrad, *Die Schlesische Toleranz: Geschichtliches Erbe und politische Idee* (Düsseldorf, 1953).

[27] N. Mout, "Netherlanders at the court in Prague," *Acta Historica Neerlandicae* 9 (1976): 21. Mout continues with an interesting comparison between Breslau and Antwerp.

[28] See the introductory comments to *The Medical Renaissance of the Sixteenth Century*, A. Wear, R.K. French and I.M. Lonie, eds. (Cambridge, 1985), ix.

[29] *Luthers Werke-Briefwechsel*, vol. 9 (Weimar, 1941), 582.

hold for six years, I know Luther better than I do anyone else alive. I enjoyed not only his company but also had intimate conversations with him."[30] Luther wanted Crato to pursue a career in the church, but he realized that his student's constitution was not sufficiently strong to withstand the rigors of a pulpit ministry.[31] Both he and Melanchthon thought Crato would best be suited in the medical profession. With their full assent Crato travelled south of the Alps to Padua and began his medical studies with the renowned physician Giovanni Battista da Monte.

Of Crato's three teachers, Luther, Melanchthon, and da Monte, it was Melanchthon who had the greatest impact on the young Silesian.[32] Melanchthon was a compelling role model. The humanist's emphasis on the dual ideals of piety and erudition impressed the young pupil.[33] Melanchthon's irenic temper and conciliatory spirit also affected Crato, and like his mentor, he was influenced by Calvinist theology. In 1529 at the Colloquy of Marburg a young and intransigent Melanchthon had followed Luther's example and refused to compromise with Bucer and Zwingli. In the intervening years his attitude slowly changed. He gradually assimilated elements of Calvin's teachings. Melanchthon and his followers, the "Philippists," were soon accused of being secret Calvinists.[34] Under the influence of his teacher, Crato became a part of this group which had ties with both Wittenberg and Geneva. Perhaps of all the Protestant groups this one best understood the importance of confessional harmony. Building a broad platform for the Protestant community was a part of their endeavor. When Crato returned to Silesia, he became the

[30] Cited in Adam, 263.

[31] Luther to the city council of Breslau, 16 April 1543, *Luthers Werke-Briefwechsel*, vol. 10 (Weimar, 1947), 296.

[32] It was through Melanchthon's assistance that Crato mastered both Greek and Latin before embarking on a rigorous study of history and philosophy. His work earned high praise from his teacher. Melanchthon was so impressed with Crato's oratory that he dubbed his pupil's elocution *Dictio Cratoniana*. Melanchthon to Crato, 25 September 1556, *Beiträge zum Briefwechsel Melanchthons*, Paul Fleming, ed. (Naumburg, 1904), 57; Henschel, 9.

Concerning their friendship, Melanchthon would later write Crato, "I want there to be between us a perpetual friendship which we will enjoy for eternity in the heavenly church. . . ." Melanchthon to Crato, 25 September 1556, Fleming, 57.

[33] Crato in turn supported young scholars who sought to combine the same ideals. See the doctor's correspondence with Nicholas Rhediger III who was then studying in Basel. Melanchthonian in tone, Crato's letters are full of advice for the young student living far from home. Note particularly letter #109 where Crato writes, "It is not necessary that I remind you concerning piety and the study of history." Wrocław University Library, manuscript division, microfilm 8894, 21 November 1574, #109. Also see Crato's *Exemplum litterarum nobilitatis Christophori Lang*, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, CVP 9212, 21r–24v.

[34] Ernst Siegmund-Schultze, "Kryptocalvinismus in den Schlesischen Kirchenordnungen," *Jahrbuch der Schlesischen Friedrich Wilhelms Universität zu Breslau* 5 (1960): 52–53.

leader of a crypto-Calvinist circle in Breslau.[35] These men had a profound effect on the spiritual life of the region. Eschewing the extremes of the Gnesio-Lutherans and radical Calvinists, they contributed to the mild character of Silesian Protestantism.[36]

As their correspondence attests, central Europe's crypto-Calvinists worked for unity between the region's Protestant factions.[37] Crato and his compatriots lamented the religious polarization that afflicted the empire. In 1568 he expressed his worries to Thomas Rhediger. He was concerned that a Catholic party and a Flacian faction were aggressively vying for power at Maximilian's court.[38] In the course of one of his few trips back to Breslau during Maximilian's reign, Crato was alarmed to find the usual placid temper of the city troubled. In a letter to Nicholas Rhediger III, he complained, "Home was less pleasant due to the madness of the theologians."[39] Whether Schwenckfeldians or Anabaptists, Crato scathingly censured the behavior of those who stirred up religious excess and disturbed the fragile peace between confessions.[40] In his letters to Crato, Melanchthon encouraged his former pupil to help maintain Protestant unity.[41] In a strident tone he reminded Crato, "Our order must defend this harmony, which however little is preserved, is of service to the republic. . . . Too little of this good has been granted

[35] Manfred Fleischer, "Die schlesische Irenik: Unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Habsburger Zeit," *Jahrbuch für Schlesische Kirchengeschichte* 55 (1976): 94, 95. Also useful is Manfred Fleischer, "Der Erfolg des Ursinus," *Jahrbuch der Schlesischen Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität* 28 (1987): fn. 46.

[36] Siegmund-Schulze, 66, 67.

[37] Both the appendix in Gillet (vol. 2) and the Fleming collection of the Melanchthon correspondence are useful in this regard. Also see the correspondence between Crato and Melanchthon's son-in-law, Caspar Peucer. Particularly interesting is their interchange concerning the colloquy of Altenburg between the Flacians and the synergists. Gillet, 2:507–508. For more on the Altenburg colloquy, see *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche* (Freiburg, 1930), 1:314. For Peucer, also see Ernst Benz, *Wittenberg und Byzanz* (Marburg, 1949), 139.

[38] Wrocław University Library, manuscript division, microfilm R 242, 22 September 1568, 59r.

[39] Wrocław University Library, manuscript division, microfilm 8894, 21 August 1575, #118.

[40] Concerning both Schwenkfeldianism and Anabaptism, Crato wrote, "From these [groups] I do not doubt that good men are absent." *Decades Tres Epistolarum*, I. Weber, ed. (Frankfurt, 1702), 27 November 1575, #15.

He expressed similar sentiments regarding astrology. He warned that a fanatical attachment to this pseudoscience could easily stir one up against "pure religion." Crato, *Assertio Io. Cratonis* (Frankfurt, 1585), 8.

[41] In one such letter he warned Crato that "the seeds of dissent should not be sown [in the church]." Fleming, 1 January 1553, #26, 40.

to humankind."[42] Both of these men actively sought ways to build harmony and sustain peace in the religious community. Their influence would eventually reach Vienna.[43]

Crato and His Hapsburg Patrons

Though Crato's irenic personality made him a suitable choice for the imperial court, it was of course his medical reputation that prompted Ferdinand to call him to Vienna. Crato's work as a city physician in Breslau had received great notice. In 1551 a commemorative medal was cast in his honor for his efforts combatting the plague. During a subsequent trip to Vienna he met two officials of the court chancery, Sigismund Held and George Mehl. The support of these two patrons helped win him the appointment at court.[44] In 1556 he moved to Vienna. He quickly won the emperor's trust and reportedly exercised a calming effect on Ferdinand's fiery temper.[45] He became one of the emperor's favorites and began to advise him on nonmedical matters.[46]

It was with Ferdinand's son, however, that Crato reached the height of his power at court. His relationship with Maximilian was especially close. For twelve years Crato was almost always in his personal attendance.[47] He wore a medal bearing an engraving of Maximilian, a personal gift to the doctor from the emperor.[48] While visiting Crato at his home in Breslau in 1563, Maximilian also presented him with a special token of friendship. The present was Emperor Ferdinand's banquet table. Adding a personal touch for the doctor,

[42] Ibid., 1 March 1553, #30, 42.

[43] See Thomas Kaufmann's intriguing comments concerning the influence of Melanchthon at the Hapsburg court. Analyzing a poem by Goerge Hoefnagel, Kaufmann argues that the German educator was a compelling role model for the circle of irenic humanists at Vienna and Prague. Thomas Kaufmann, "The Nature of Imitation: Hoefnagel on Dürer" in *The Mastery of Nature* (Princeton, 1993), 89–94.

[44] Henschel, 12.

[45] T.G. von Karajan, "Krato von Kraftheim," *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Geschichts- und Staatskunde* 1 (1835): 146.

[46] Matthias Dresser, Crato's first biographer, relates, "Nec consultationibus medicis solum modo eius delectatus est optimus ille imperator, sed in aliis etiam rebus pluribus eiusdem consilio uti consuevit. Quin ad extremum usque spiritum vitae dilexit eum, et in morbo illo suo gravi et mortifero non minus consolationes eius, pietate plenas, quam curationes admisit." Matthias Dresser, *De curriculo vitae Ioannis Cratonis à Craftheim* (Leipzig, 1587), 22.

[47] Johannis Crato, *Oratio Funebris de Divo Maximiliano Imperatore Caesare Augusto II* (Breslau, 1577), Ciir.

[48] *Ecclesia Londino-Batavae Archivum*, vol. 1, *Abrahami Ortellii Epistolae*, J.H. Hessels, ed. (Cambridge, 1887), 5 June 1575, #58, 131–132.

Maximilian had carved on its surface a series of proverbs and religious quotations.[49] The doctor was not only the emperor's friend but also a trusted advisor. Soon after his accession to the imperial throne Maximilian appointed Crato to the Privy Council and granted him an honorary title of nobility.

Upon Maximilian's death in 1576 Crato wished to retire from imperial service. The depressed and tired physician wrote that he was eager to leave the pressure of the court and return home to devote himself "to God and the muses."[50] Crato's wish remained unfulfilled. To the Flemish cartographer, Abraham Ortelius, he sadly related, "I returned home and considered myself relieved of my troubles at the court, but many difficulties beset me. Before the end of one year I had to return to court."[51] Maximilian's son, Emperor Rudolf, was mentally unstable and relied heavily on Crato's advice. His soothing presence was largely responsible for Rudolf's recovery from a debilitating physical and psychological collapse in the late 1570s.[52]

As a Christian humanist, Johannis Crato devoted considerable attention to those issues which kept the Christian community divided.[53] The personal

[49] Among the maxims the emperor inscribed for Crato were the following: "Let the name of God be blessed"; "Hear, see and be silent if you desire to live in peace"; "For they neglect all things except loving God"; and the emperor's own humanist motto, "God will provide" (Adam, 275, 276). For Maximilian's 1563 visit to Breslau, see Rudolf Fricke, "Maximilian II und der Fürstentag zu Breslau im Dezember 1563" (Ph.D. diss., Breslau, 1878).

[50] Johannis Crato, *Epistola ad Ioannem Sambucem de Morte Imperatoris Maximiliani Secundi* (Jena, 1781), 24.

[51] *Abrahami Ortellii Epistolae*, 26 October 1578, #79, 184.

[52] R.J.W. Evans, *Rudolf II and His World* (Oxford, 1973), 89.

[53] Most interesting is Crato's dialog with Melanchthon concerning the Eucharist, the single greatest obstacle to Protestant union. In a remarkable letter to Crato written a year before the reformer's death, Melanchthon outlined his research on this doctrine. He turned to the world of late antiquity and began a thorough reading of Origen, Tertullian, Gregory of Nazianzus and Augustine. To Crato, Melanchthon stressed the importance of such study: "It was my care to examine antiquity as much as I was able . . . I do not want to start a dispute [by this work]. I only want you to study antiquity" (*Corpus Reformatorum*, vol. 9 [Halle, 1842], 21 March 1559, 784–786).

Crato followed his teacher's model. A letter from Jacob Monau shows the Silesian physician involved in a serious discussion concerning the *communicatio idiomatum*. In this debate, which had important repercussions regarding Real Presence interpretations of the Eucharist, Crato and Monau turned to the work of Theodoret, the fifth-century monk-bishop of Cyrrhus. Theodoret's writings were a moderating influence in the Christological debates of the fifth century. His work was a bridge between the views of Nestorius and Cyril of Alexandria. Monau and Crato examined Theodoret to help understand the doctrine of the *communicatio idiomatum*. After citing three selections from the third dialog of Theodoret's *Eranistes*, Monau summarized his argument:

> What could be said better, more sensibly or more correctly? The one who will hold these precepts [of Theodoret] will not easily fall on cliffs of Schwenkfeldianism, Flacianism, Eutychianism, Brenzianism and other similar blasphemies. (Wrocław University Library, manuscript division, microfilm R 248, undated, 325r–326r; Gillet, 2:536–537)

For the citations from Theodoret's *Eranistes*, see Gerard Ettlinger, *Eranistes: Critical Text and Prolegomena* (Oxford, 1975), 226.

physician to three emperors, he also occupied a lofty position of power in Vienna. His status with the Hapsburgs afforded him a more practical opportunity to seek reconciliation among the Protestant groups of the empire. Combined with the prestige he commanded at the imperial court, Crato's Silesian roots were also an important asset. Melanchthon had used him as an intermediary between Wittenberg and Protestant groups of the East.[54] Our examination of Crato as an imperial mediator and a bridge between German Protestantism and its Slavic counterpart will focus on his relationship with the Bohemian Brethren.

[54] See Melanchthon's two requests regarding Poland and Hungary. Fleming, 8 August 1552, #20, 36; 1 September 1552, #23, 38.

II

Crato and the Bohemian Brethren

The *Unitas Fratrum* and the Austrian Hapsburgs

The Bohemian Brethren or *Unitas Fratrum* were a product of the Hussite movement. Known as the Utraquists for their practice of receiving communion in both kinds, the followers of Jan Hus took Bohemia by storm in the early fifteenth century. Catholics defected to the Utraquists in such great numbers that the see of Prague remained vacant for over one hundred years. But as the Utraquists matured as a group, they lost the spiritual vitality of their early days. The *Unitas Fratrum* developed in reaction to their growing worldliness. Led by Gregory of Prague, a small band of believers left Prague in the winter of 1457–1458 to establish a settlement in the village of Kunvald in northeastern Bohemia. Far from the cosmopolitan contamination of the Bohemian capital, they pursued a simple and ascetic lifestyle according to the pattern of the early church.[55] They followed the teaching of Peter Chelčický, an early follower of Hus who rejected both the use of violence and involvement with secular authority. Under his influence, the Brethren slowly severed their ties with the Utraquists. In 1464 they formulated their own constitution and three years later they established an independent priesthood.[56]

The differences between the Brethren and the Utraquists were less doctrinal than structural. The *Unitas Fratrum* bound themselves together through

[55] One important exception to their simple lifestyle was music. In 1505 they published the first Protestant hymnbook. Gustav Vožda, "Jan Blahoslav-Musicus" in *Sborník Jan Blahoslav Přerovský* (Přerov, 1971), 69.

[56] Otakar Odložilík presents a brief overview of the *Unitas Fratrum* in "A Church in a Hostile State: The Unity of Czech Brethren," *Central European History* 6 (1973): 111–127. For a more extensive treatment in English see Peter Brock, *The Political and Social Doctrines of the Unity of Czech Brethren in the Fifteenth and Early Sixteenth Centuries* (The Hague, 1957). One of the best general studies in Czech is Rudolf Říčan, *Dějiny Jednoty bratrské* (Prague, 1957).

an efficient system of church discipline and close-knit organization. Their legal status, however, was constantly in doubt. The Hussites had negotiated a settlement known as the Compacts with the Council of Basel in the early fifteenth century. The Utraquists were granted the right to serve communion in both kinds, but in all other matters they were to follow the Roman church. If a monarch was benevolent the Brethren would be covered under these agreements, but the Compacts themselves were never officially sanctioned by any pope. Thus the Brethren led a tenuous existence, struggling to survive and periodically suffering seasons of intense persecution.

In 1526 Louis of Jagellon, king of Bohemia and Hungary, was killed by the Turks at the battle of Mohács. Louis left no direct heirs, and the kingdom fell to his brother-in-law, Ferdinand I. Under the Hapsburgs, the Brethren fared poorly. In the middle of the sixteenth century the *Unitas Fratrum* allied themselves with a German Protestant federation, the Schmalkaldic League. This Protestant union led a rebellion against the Catholic Hapsburgs which was crushed in 1547. The *Unitas Fratrum* bore the brunt of imperial anger. An old mandate against the sect was renewed, and Brethren adherents in Bohemia were particularly affected.[57] Many of them emigrated to Poland, and in 1548 one of their most important leaders, Jan Augusta, was imprisoned in the fortress of Křivoklát.[58]

The Brethren community in Moravia, however, was able to find influential allies who helped safeguard their interests. Their leader, Jan Blahoslav, forged important relationships with the Lutheran party in Saxony. He also looked to Vienna and the young son of Emperor Ferdinand. Hearing rumors of Maximilian's favorable disposition to Protestantism, he undertook his first mission to Vienna in March 1555. The results of this first journey were encouraging, and in the next thirty months he made three further trips to Maximilian's court.[59] Blahoslav did not speak directly with the archduke but pleaded his case to Maximilian's court preacher, the Protestant firebrand Sebastian Pfauser.[60] Pfauser had come to Maximilian's court in 1554. Remarkably, he had been recommended to Emperor Ferdinand by the bishop of

[57] Originally issued by King Vladislav in 1508, this edict prohibited the *Unitas Fratrum* from public worship and the administration of the sacraments. Odložilík, 115, 117.

[58] O. Odložilík, "Die Wittenberger Philippisten und die Brüderunität" in *Ost und West: Festschrift für Eduard Winter*, W. Steinist, ed. (Berlin, 1966), 106.

[59] For the reports of Blahoslav's first four embassies to Vienna see *Quellen zur Geschichte der Böhmischen Brüder*, Anton Gindely, ed. vol. 19 (Vienna, 1859), 125–184.

[60] Blahoslav's primary concern was the imprisonment of Augusta, but on one of these missions he also presented Maximilian with a German translation of a Brethren catechism. Robert Holtzmann, *Kaiser Maximilian II bis zu seiner Thronbesteigung (1527–1564)* (Berlin, 1903), 254, 268–269.

Trent even though he was married to the daughter of a clergyman from Linz and had a child. Any doubts concerning his religious orientation were quickly dispelled. Pfauser regularly referred to Catholics as "chatterboxes, flatterers, hypocrites, uneducated idiots, miserable leaders of the blind and hangmen of souls."[61] Before the emperor on the feast day of St. Peter and Paul, 1559, Pfauser, preached from a favorite Lutheran text, Matthew 16:13. In the sermon he railed againts the abuses of the church, stressed the necessity of faith alone, and questioned apostolic succession.[62] As could be expected, Emperor Ferdinand exerted great pressure on his son to dismiss Pfauser. After some resistance Maximilian asked his chaplain to leave in 1560. With his departure, Blahoslav and the Brethren were left without an influential advocate close to Maximilian.

Crato's Early Efforts for the Brethren

In many ways Johannis Crato filled the gap left by Sebastian Pfauser. Matthew Dresser, Crato's first biographer, notes concerning the doctor's role at court:

> By his intercession before the emperor he procured privileges, honors and other benefits for many who sought imperial favor. He even saved some from great danger. This has been verified by the testimony of many who are still alive.[63]

Foremost among the groups whom Crato assisted were the Bohemian Brethren. The last Brethren elder, the great educator John Amos Comenius, recognized Crato's contributions and praised his important efforts of mediation for the sake of the Czech Protestants.[64] Crato's contact with them began in the years after Pfauser's dismissal. In 1561 the *Unitas Fratrum* published a second edition of their 1535 confession.[65] The Brethren elders realized that this Czech edition reached a limited audience. In 1564 they commissioned Peter Herbert, a young Moravian who had studied at Wittenberg, to produce a German version of the text.[66] Herbert needed assistance with this project

[61] T. Wiedemann, *Geschichte der Reformation und Gegenreformation im Lande unter der Enns* (Prague, 1879), 2:111.

[62] Carl Haupt, *Melanchthon und seiner Einfluss auf Maximilian II von Österreich* (Wittenberg, 1897), 26.

[63] Dresser, 23.

[64] J.A. Comenius, *Historia O Těžkých Protivenstvích Církve České* (Lesno, 1655). Reprinted in *Dílo Jana Amose Komenského* (Prague, 1989), 9:95, 96.

[65] This confession can be found in *Collectio Confessionum in Ecclesiis Reformatis*, H.A. Niemeyer, ed. (Leipzig, 1840), 771–818.

[66] Odložilík,"Die Wittenberger Philippisten und die Brüderunität," 108.

and turned to the older Crato for help. Together they completed the translation of the Brethren confession.[67]

Two years later Crato had another opportunity to help the Brethren. A deputation came to Vienna with a copy of their 1564 confession. Advising them to give the emperor a copy of one of their hymnals, Crato arranged an audience with Maximilian.[68] It was during this time that he met Jan Blahoslav, who used him as his personal physician.[69] Blahoslav earned Crato's respect, and a sincere friendship developed between the two men. Crato's commitment to the *Unitas Fratrum* deepened over the years. He became bolder with Maximilian. In April 1568 he submitted a formal petition requesting imperial protection for the Brethren. The emperor gave an evasive answer to his plea. In October, however, he ordered all their meeting houses closed. Though it seems probable that Maximilian was personally sympathetic to many of the Brethren's concerns, political constraints dictated his actions. He was under an imperial obligation to preserve Bohemia's religious and political status quo.[70] Crato was hard pressed to assist the Brethren, for the legal complexities of the empire added further complications to an already difficult task.

The 1570 Memorandum

In Bohemia itself the Brethren were not only threatened by the Catholics; their relationship with the Utraquists was also tense.[71] In 1570 the Utraquists petitioned Maximilian to extend the use of the Augsburg Confession to the Bohemian kingdom. The *Unitas Fratrum* was concerned that if this request were granted, its members could be more easily persecuted as their freedom would not have been guaranteed by this concession.[72] Though Maximilian refused to confer this privilege, the Brethren's fears were not allayed. Once more they turned to Crato for help. On his way back from the Reichstag at Speyer in 1570, Crato stopped at the estate of one of his Czech patrons in Moravia. There he composed a lengthy letter which addressed the security needs of the *Unitas Fratrum*.[73] Crato recognized their precarious position

[67] Crato to Ondřej Štefan, 3 March 1574, reprinted in *Quellen*, 390.

[68] F. Hrejsa, *Česká Konfesse, její vznik, podstaty a dějiny* (Prague, 1912), 18, 154.

[69] Gillet, 2:15.

[70] Ibid., 2:15–16.

[71] For a quick overview of the religious situation in Bohemia and Moravia at Maximilian's accession see Anton Gindely, "Religiöse Verhältnisse in Böhmen und Mähren in der ersten Zeit der Regierung Maximilian's II" in *Jahresbericht der k.k. böhmischen Ober-Realschule zu Prag* (1857): 3–12.

[72] Gillet, 2:16.

[73] Ibid., 2:20. This document is reprinted in *Quellen*, 374–376.

and proposed a controversial solution to their dilemma. His opening remarks set the tone of the entire proposal:

> The Holy Fathers saw that a multitude and variety of confessions are the cause of the greatest evils and dissensions in the church. We are having the same experience in our own age since even those who agree concerning doctrine put forth diverse catechisms and confessions. Some are of the Augsburg Confession, some of the Brethren . . . Some of the Genevan, others of the Reformed churches and some of Zurich. In a word there is no end or boundary [to these divisions]. There are nearly as many catechisms as there are pastors in cities and teachers in schools. There is no doubt that this variety is dangerous to the churches and gives opportunity for slander to the enemies of the gospel.[74]

He compared the Bohemian situation to the Biblical church of Corinth, a church divided into rival factions siding with different teachers.[75] As in all of Europe the most contentious issue between the Protestant sects of Bohemia and Moravia was the Eucharist. Crato noted ironically that Christ's four simple words *Hoc est corpus meum* had spawned a host of conflicting theological interpretations. He argued that good Christians should continue to respect each other despite the variety of opinion. For Crato, the Lord's Supper was not an issue that should cause further division within the Christian community.[76]

These irenic convictions formed the basis of Crato's proposal. He believed that the Brethren should openly identify with the Utraquists voluntarily giving up their own confessional statements and adopting the Augsburg Confession. Anticipating the response of his critics, Crato raised several possible objections to his recommendation. Earlier confessions of the Brethren had been reviewed and approved by leading Protestant theologians.[77] Many would question the wisdom of abandonning that which had already been judged good and true. Crato also realized that the Brethren elders were concerned that their true distinctives, church discipline and organization, could be lost by their subscription to the Augsburg Confession. He countered by reminding them of the greater danger facing their church. Caught between the

[74] *Quellen*, 374.

[75] I Corinthians 3:3–4.

[76] "Returning to the institute [of the Eucharist] I think that a schism should not be made because of various interpretations of one or another article [of faith]." *Quellen*, 374.

[77] Martin Luther himself was one of those who expressed his approval of the Brethren. Anton Gindely, *Geschichte der Böhmischen Brüder* (Osnabruck, 1862), 2:95. It should also be remembered that the earliest confessional statements of the *Unitas Fratrum* predated the Augsburg Confession by more than fifty years.

Catholics and the Lutheran Utraquists, the Brethren had good reason to fear for their security. For the *Unitas Fratrum* to remain a small, independent sect would be more dangerous than joining a broad Protestant confederation. Furthermore, a confessional merger would affect neither the church's polity nor discipline.

Crato urged the Brethren to follow this course of "pious moderation."[78] To refuse union would be an indication that they loved division and their own confession more than truth and concord. An alliance between the *Unitas Fratrum* and the Utraquists would strengthen the Protestant cause in Bohemia and safeguard orthodoxy from the extremes of the Anabaptists and other radical sects. He also pointed out that a Lutheran catechism which had been published in Wittenberg that year essentially agreed with all points of Brethren doctrine. Crato hoped if Blahoslav and his colleagues were still somewhat sceptical of his proposal, they would recognize its practicality, for he concluded by noting, "To write much and to establish rivalries is neither safe nor secure."[79]

Crato's petition was not well received. Blahoslav commented critically, "The advice of that good man Crato is both strange and very hard."[80] These were the most charitable words he had for him in this affair. He challenged Crato's argument with this blunt rejoinder:

> Our fathers separated themselves from the Utraquists for important reasons. Their teaching has been passed on to us from hand to hand. We have grown up under their tutelage. Should we then give up that which has been up to now our safeguard and create the impression for our ancestors that our beliefs have been worthless?[81]

He continued by personally attacking the imperial physician. He described Crato as a tree standing alone in a desert, a man without a community having failed to identify himself as either a Lutheran or a Calvinist. Sarcastically he noted, "Crato claims to belong to the New Testament church. That means his fellow Christians are those who are no longer living."[82] Blahoslav's response effectively destroyed the friendship between the two men, but despite this disappointing rebuff Crato faithfully stood by the *Unitas Fratrum* in these years of crisis. An embittered Blahoslav died only a few months later, but Crato continued his intercessory work with a new generation of Czech leaders.

[78] *Quellen*, 375.

[79] Ibid., 376.

[80] Ferdinand Hrejsa, "Náboženské Stanovisko b. Jana Blaholava" in *Sborník Blahoslavův*, (Přerov, 1923) 85.

[81] Cited in Gindely, *Geschichte der Böhmischen Brüder*, 2:66.

[82] Ibid., 2:67.

Crato as a Link to the Reformed Community

In October 1571 the Brethren elected three new bishops. Blahoslav's successor in Moravia was Ondřej Štefan. Crato developed a solid working relationship with Štefan.[83] Though Crato's advice concerning the Augsburg Confession was rejected, he helped the *Unitas Fratrum* win the support of a wider Protestant audience by assisting them with a new Latin translation of their confession. The earlier 1535 confession needed revision and lacked stylistic sophistication. The Brethren's first choice to translate the confession was Crato's friend from Leipzig, the humanist scholar Joachim Camerarius. A sickly Camerarius was not able to accept this commission, but Crato directed the Brethren to Esrom Rüdiger, Camerarius's son-in-law. Rüdiger had recently become professor of philosophy and Greek literature at Wittenberg, and under his supervision the Brethren confession was translated. Both the new Latin confession and older 1564 German edition were published jointly at Wittenberg in 1573.[84]

Crato's work with this confession was not finished, however. He served as an important link between the *Unitas Fratrum* and the Reformed churches to the west. Štefan sent Crato a number of copies of the new translation. He in turn passed them on to Heidelberg and Geneva. The response from these outside readers was overwhelmingly positive. Theodore Beza with whom Crato had been corresponding for a number of years, praised the simplicity and prudence of the Brethren.[85] Crato's compatriot in Heidelberg, Zacharias Ursinus, sent words of encouragement to the Czech church.[86] Writing to Štefan in May 1574, he lamented the rivalries that divided the Protestant church but praised the Brethren's desire to associate with the larger body of Christian believers.[87] Girolamo Zanchi, an Italian Protestant and professor of theology at Heidelberg, and Caspar Olevianus, the church superintendent of the Palatinate, also received copies of the confession from Crato. They were unanimous

[83] See in particular Crato's letter to Štefan of 3 March 1574. *Quellen*, 390–391.

[84] Odložilík, "Die Wittenberger Philippisten und die Brüderunität," 108.

[85] Beza to Crato, 25 June 1575, *Quellen*, 409. Though Beza did question certain articles of the confession, he was always warm and cordial with the *Unitas Fratrum*. See Beza to Crato, August 1574 and Crato to Štefan, March 1575, *Quellen*, 394–397; 408.

[86] Ursinus, like Crato, had attended the Elizabeth Gymnasium in Breslau and then continued his studies at Wittenberg coming under the moderating influence of Philip Melanchthon. In 1561 he began teaching at Heidelberg. For more on Ursinus see Derk Visser, "Zacharias Ursinus" in *Shapers of Religious Traditions in Germany, Switzerland, and Poland, 1560–1600*, ed. Jill Raitt, New Haven, 1981, 121–140.

[87] *Quellen*, 399–402.

in their support of the document. Zanchi commended both the Brethren's doctrine and piety while Olevianus proudly proclaimed, "All churches of Christ are one in the Lord."[88]

The 1575 Bohemian Parliament and the *Confessio Bohemica*

While the Brethren were receiving these affirmative responses from the Reformed community, a critical event occurred in Saxony which in large part determined their future theological orientation. Up to 1574 the *Unitas Fratrum* had cultivated their relationships with both Lutheran and Calvinist parties. With the help of Crato and others they sought acceptance in a broad and tolerant Protestant union. Their Melanchthonian position was jeopardized in 1574 when the Flacian Lutherans won control of the Protestant church in Saxony. Elector August of Saxony was persuaded to impose a narrow and rigid formula on the church. Philippist adherents were either expelled or incarcerated, and the larger dialog with Calvinist Europe was terminated.

Both Crato and the Brethren leadership were disheartened by the dramatic turn of events. Caspar Peucer, Philip Melanchthon's son-in-law, was jailed by the new regime. Announcing the disastrous news of the Flacian coup to Crato, he reported, "Yes, I live though more as a corpse than a human being."[89] In their correspondence, Crato and Štefan also expressed their concern for the safety of Esrom Rüdiger.[90] Rüdiger did manage to escape Wittenberg, and with Crato's assistance he came to the Brethren school in the Moravian village of Ivančice. Štefan feared the repercussions of the unwelcomed Saxon development. He wrote Crato, "This Saxon tragedy which has also happened in Silesia in the duchy of Brieg is very near at hand. We ought to pray faithfully to God lest it be introduced in Bohemia as well."[91] Both Crato and Štefan realized the implications of a Gnesio-Lutheran church in Czech territory. The Brethren would be isolated and more vulnerable to the whims of the Hapsburg family.

The events in Saxony were all the more important due to the upcoming parliament in Prague. Here Crato had a final opportunity to aid the Brethren. Emperor Maximilian came before this assembly with two critical requests:

[88] Zanchi to Crato, 26 January 1574, *Quellen*, 389–390; Olevianus to Štefan, 6 September 1574, *Quellen*, 398–399.

[89] Peucer to Crato, 2 July 1574. Reproduced in Gillet, 2:522–523.

[90] Crato to Štefan, 11 January 1575, *Quellen*, 407; Štefan to Crato, 8 February 1575, *Quellen*, 406–407.

[91] Štefan to Crato, 8 February 1575, *Quellen*, 406.

financial assistance for a campaign against the Turks and the election of his son Rudolf to the Bohemian throne.[92] Crato realized that Maximilian would be willing to make some type of religious concessions to receive the support he needed. He believed with shrewd negotiation the *Unitas Fratrum* could at long last win imperial protection. Toward this end there were two options available for the Brethren: they could either join the Utraquists as he advised in 1571 or appeal independently to Maximilian.[93] This time he recommended the latter course. The events of the previous year had persuaded Crato that the interests of the Brethren would best be served separately. Fearing the growing Flacian influence, he believed union with the Utraquists would be a capitulation to "the barbaric lawlessness of the Gnesio-Lutherans."[94]

Events in Poland five years before suggested to Crato a means to achieve a broad and equitable religious settlement in Bohemia. There were three major Protestant groups in Poland: Lutheran, Reformed, and the *Unitas Fratrum*.[95] Fearing the rising tide of anti-trinitarian heresy, these three parties met at Sandomierz and came to an agreement in April 1570. An attempt to establish a single confession failed, but while they acknowledged their theological differences, each group pledged itself to close cooperation with the others. The principle source of contention, the doctrine of the Eucharist, was set aside by common consent. To maintain harmony the three parties emphasized their agreement on other essentials of the faith.[96]

Crato believed a similar strategy could succeed in Bohemia. He urged the Brethren leadership to trust him as their advocate before the emperor. In March 1575 he travelled from Prague to the Moravian town of Znojmo to meet Maximilian. There he had an extended conversation with the emperor. He discussed the history and theological perspective of these Czech Protestants. Of all the groups which had left the church of Rome, he maintained that none modeled the New Testament church more closely than the Brethren. According to Crato, the emperor responded, "That is true, Crato, for neither have we found any other."[97] The elated Silesian conveyed the news of his interview to the Brethren. Throughout the spring he remained confident

[92] For an account of this parliament see Jaroslav Pánek, *Stavovská opozice a její zapas s Habsburky: 1547–1577* (Prague, 1982), 101–119.

[93] Hrejsa, *Česká Konfesse*, 133; Pánek, 108, 109.

[94] Crato to Christoph Herdesianus, 21 October 1575, reprinted in Gillet, 2:30.

[95] After the Schmalkaldic War, a group of the Brethren emigrated to Poland under the leadership of George Izrael. For an account of this branch of the *Unitas Fratrum* see Jaroslav Biblo, *Jednota bratrská v prvním vyhanství* (Prague, 1900–1932), 4 vols.

[96] *Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature* (Grand Rapids, 1981), 9:339–340.

[97] Hrejsa, 118, fn. 3.

that the emperor would safeguard the interests of the group. Two months later he again approached Maximilian as he passed on another copy of the Brethren confession.[98] Apart from a few vague words of support, however, Maximilian made no definite commitment to the *Unitas Fratrum*. Despite this noncommital position, Crato was still optimistic that the emperor and his son would grant religious freedom to the Brethren.[99]

There were those among the Brethren, however, who were more sceptical. They knew that their relationship with the Hapsburgs had been marked in the best of times by empty promises and in the worst by open hostility. They argued that security could only be found in a larger confederation with the Utraquists. In Bohemia and Moravia 75 percent of the population were Utraquists while the Brethren comprised only 10 percent.[100] Like Crato, they too looked at the Consensus of Sandomierz as a possible model for an effective settlement. But where Sandomierz had failed, they believed they could actually compose a new confession acceptable both to the Utraquists and themselves. Work on the new confession began in spring 1575. Though Crato hoped that the emperor would approve the Brethren confession, he did not oppose the negotiations with the Utraquists. In a letter to Abraham Ortelius, he wrote, "All Bohemia has joined those of the Augsburg Confession, who also call the Waldenses [i.e., the *Unitas Fratrum*] their brethren, against the wish of many who find more pleasure in gossip than in living according to the Gospel."[101] In the end, Crato's confidence in the emperor was unfounded. After the close of the Bohemian parliament and the royal election of Rudolf, Maximilian renewed his father's old mandate that closed the meeting houses of the *Unitas Fratrum*. In February 1576 Štefan wrote Crato asking him to withdraw his petition before the emperor. A discouraged but still accomodating Crato responded affirmatively.[102] Maximilian would die in October 1576. With his death, Crato's direct involvement with the Brethren came to an end. In the following years they would continue to seek imperial approval of the *Confessio Bohemica*. Rudolf's sanction finally came in 1609 with the famous Letter of Majesty which guaranteed religious freedom in the Czech lands.

Before we leave the Brethren, a few words should be said about the *Confessio*

[98] Ibid., 173.

[99] See Crato's optimistic letter describing the Bohemian coronation of Rudolf. Wrocław University Library, manuscript division, microfilm 8894, 25 September 1575, #123. Also pertinent is Hrejsa, 115.

[100] Jiří Otter, "Ekumenická Dimenze České Konfese," *Křeťanská Revue* 42 (1975): 136.

[101] Crato to Ortelius, 5 June 1575, reprinted in *Abrahami Ortellii Epistolae*, 131–132.

[102] Hrejsa, 274. Štefan to Crato, 5 February 1576, *Quellen*, 415–418; Crato to Štefan, 10 February 1576, *Quellen*, 414–415.

Bohemica. The *Confessio Bohemica* was the first ecumenical confession ever written. Cobbling together a compromise document, its authors borrowed liberally from the Augsburg Confession and the theological statements of the *Unitas Fratrum*. They sought to articulate a common faith shared by all Czech Protestants. The confession's emphasis on Holy Scripture was a typical expression of this approach.[103] Doctrinal compromises were scattered throughout the document. The article concerning justification stressed both the Lutheran position on faith and the Brethren emphasis on holy living. Regarding the church, the *Confessio Bohemica* included the Lutheran attention to the preaching of God's Word and the Brethren view on the signs of the true church.[104] Faith and good works, two concerns that had been treated separately in the Augsburg Confession, were now brought together in one article to accomodate the Brethren. The most divisive of issues, the Eucharist, was also handled in a mild fashion. It was carefully worded so as not to offend those of either a moderate Lutheran or Calvinist position. Though Crato was not directly involved in its composition, the *Confessio Bohemica* is the one lasting monument to the irenic spirit he championed at the imperial court.

An assessment of Crato's involvement with the *Unitas Fratrum* must consider his contributions in two areas. His efforts of mediation were an expression of his desire to build and support a cooperative and harmonious Protestant community. Before the door between Wittenberg and Geneva was closed in 1574, Crato hoped to bring the Brethren into a broad Protestant fellowship. After the triumph of the Gnesio-Lutherans in Wittenberg Crato was instrumental in bringing Esrom Rüdiger to the Moravian school of Ivančice.[105] Rüdiger, an heir of the Melanchthonian tradition, continued to nurture an irenic spirit among the Brethren. These ideals of moderation and compromise would find their fullest expression in the next generation with John Amos Comenius, the Brethren's last bishop.

The doctor also played an important role in a process that was transforming the character of the *Unitas Fratrum*.[106] The Brethren had begun as a small Slavic separatist sect opposed to civil involvement. Crato helped end their isolation. His work on both the German and Latin translations of their con-

[103] "Tento důraz na autoritu božího Slova, jaký nenacházíme v žádné jiné konfesi z té doby (s výjimkou Bratrské o kterou se zde ČK opírá) svědčí zcela zřetelně o primárnosti biblickoteologického hlediska." Otter, 138.

[104] Ibid., 139.

[105] Esrom Rüdiger was an important figure in what proved to be a golden age for the Bohemian Brethren during the reign of Rudolf II. Between 1579 and 1593 the nearby presses of Kralice produced one of the great masterpieces of Czech literature, the Kralice Bible. Evans, *Rudolf II and His World*, 100.

[106] Brock, 272–273.

fession created closer ties between the group and major Protestant leaders of the continent. Specifically, he initiated a number of their contacts with the Reformed community. During this period the *Unitas Fratrum* were undergoing an important theological transition. Before 1574 their primary connection with the larger Protestant world was with the Lutheran church. They sent their students to Wittenberg, and their confessional statements were normally first reviewed by Lutheran theologians. But after the Flacian coup they became more interested in establishing a deeper relationship with the leaders of Geneva and Heidelberg.[107] In a letter to Zacharias Ursinus, Ondřej Štefan expressed his hopes that the Czech students in Heidelberg would imitate the Reformed model of piety and doctrine.[108] This practice of sending Brethren students to Reformed universities and schools continued long after Crato's death and had a decisive impact on their theology. John Comenius studied both at Herborn and Heidelberg. His thought and perspective clearly reflected his Reformed training.

Heidelberg's Irenic Calvinists

Before we turn to the final section of this study and investigate the failure of irenicism, we will briefly expand our scope beyond Crato and examine others who advocated policies of conciliation in an age of increasing confessionalization. The circle of Crato's correspondents included many who sought to prevent the ossification of orthodoxy in central Europe. Of particular interest are his connections with the Reformed theologians of Heidelberg. Many would argue that irenicism and Reformed theology are indeed strange bedfellows. The burning of Servetus, the radical zeal of the Dutch "Sea Beggars," and the rigid canons of Dort are all evidence of a partisan and intolerant spirit which was in part fostered by the teachings of Calvin and his successors. Despite these more celebrated incidents there were a number of attempts within the Reformed camp to lower confessional tensions and promote ecumenical cooperation. Crato's friends in Heidelberg were in the forefront of this movement.

The most important achievement of this group was the 1563 Heidelberg catechism. Frederick III, elector Palatine of the Rhine (1559–1576), was converted to Lutheranism in 1546 but later adopted Calvinism. The Heidelberg catechism was a part of Frederick's reform program for his territory. Though the elector had converted to the Reformed faith, the catechism had been com-

[107] See in particular O. Odložilík, "Bohemian Protestants and the Calvinistic Churches," *Church History* 8 (1939): 342–355.

[108] Štefan to Ursinus, undated (presumably 1574), *Quellen*, 402–403.

missioned to mollify the rival Protestant groups of the Palatinate. It was hoped that this document would serve as a basis for confessional reconciliation.[109] Its primary authors, Zacharias Ursinus and Caspar Olevianus, were sensitive in their exposition of church doctrine. Their statements concerning the sacraments could have been accepted by either a moderate Lutheran or Calvinist audience. Like the *Confessio Bohemica*, their discussion of predestination was carefully worded. The first edition of the catechism did not include the famous eightieth question which described the Catholic mass as a denial of Jesus Christ and a form of idolatry.[110] Though Frederick's reform program failed to reunite the Protestant communities of the Palatinate, the popularity of the catechism among both Calvinists and Lutherans is a witness of the ecumenical appeal of this document.[111]

Caspar Olevianus also worked for reconciliation with one of the most hated sects of the Reformation, the Anabaptists. A large number of Anabaptists lived in the Lower Palatinate. Though a colloquy to resolve doctrinal differences failed in 1571, Olevianus persuaded Frederick to allow the group complete freedom of worship.[112] Another member of the Heidelberg circle, Girolamo Zanchi, served as a mediator between feuding Protestant factions in southwest Germany on a number of occasions. The moderate Zanchi also provoked more orthodox Protestants with his assertion that the pope was not the Antichrist.[113] Ursinus's pupil, David Pareus, would carry this irenic spirit into the next century. A native of upper Silesia, Pareus would teach at Heidelberg and become an important advocate of Christian unity. His *Irenicum*, published in 1614, was written for King Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden and addressed the possibility of reuniting the Lutheran and Calvinist communities.[114]

Maximillian II and the High Point of Austrian Irenicism

Those advocating policies of conciliation and compromise within the empire were not limited to a small circle of Crato's friends. Emperor Maximilian also supported these irenic projects. His correspondence with Philip Melanchthon

[109] James Good, *The Heidelberg Confession in its Newest Light* (Philadelphia, 1914), 287.

[110] *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*, vol. 24 (Munich, 1887), 287.

[111] For Maximilian's response to the catechism see his letter to Frederick III (25 April 1563). Reprinted in O.H. Hopfen, *Kaiser Maximilian II. und der Kompromißkatholizismus* (Munich, 1895), 203.

[112] *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*, vol. 24, 288.

[113] Ibid., vol. 44 (Munich, 1898), 680.

[114] Ibid., vol. 25 (Munich, 1887), 167–169.

reflected these sentiments. The first contact between the two came in 1555. To test his son's orthodoxy, Emperor Ferdinand had submitted Maximilian a list of eleven questions concerned with basic doctrinal matters separating Protestants and Catholics. Maximilian sent the questions on to Melanchthon whose reply reached the archduke in March 1555.[115] Though decidedly Protestant in tone, Melanchthon's answers were not the words of a militant Lutheran.[116] He spoke of his desire for Christian unity and a pure and renewed catholic church.[117] Several months after Melanchthon had sent Maximilian his lengthy missive on the eleven questions, he wrote the archduke another letter. After reciting a list of godly kings from the Old Testament, Melanchthon challenged the future emperor to work as "God's tool for his *universal* church."[118] Maximilian did use his position to ease confessional tension and redress the more flagrant abuses of the Catholic church.

In 1568 the Lower Austrian nobility was granted a charter that extended to them the right to worship according to the Augsburg Confession.[119] Maximilian was concerned that the newly sanctioned church could exacerbate relationships with the region's Catholic population. He was eager to see the church follow a Melanchthonian model instead of a more rigid Flacian ideal. An imperial commission was established to oversee its initial organization. The Lower Austrian estates selected a number of delegates for this council. Maximilian had the right to revise their selection. The emperor did remove one of the delegates chosen by the estates. Jakob Andreä was a Lutheran theologian from Tübingen who was a fierce opponent of the Philippists. Maximilian replaced him with Paul Eber, superintendent of the Wittenberg church and head of the Melanchthonian party in Saxony. He appointed other mild Philippists to the imperial commission including the humanist Joachim Camerarius, the imperial diplomat Christof von Carlowitz, and the Lutheran

[115] Pfauser drafted an initial response to these queries, but Maximilian desired a more definitive statement from a more "experienced and learned man." The questions were thus dispatched to Melanchthon. *Corpus Reformatorum*, vol. 8 (Halle, 1556), 24 March 1556, 699–726. Also see Holtzmann, 262–263.

[116] Eduard Reimann, "Die religiöse Entwicklung Maximilians II in den Jahren 1554–1564," *Historische Zeitschrift* 15 (1866): 13, 14.

[117] *Corpus Reformatorum*, vol. 8, 723. Maximilian appreciated Melanchthon's irenic sympathies, for he later praised the humanist and his desire for religious reconciliation. *Philippi Melanchthonis Epistolae*, H.E. Bindseil, ed. (Halle, 1874): 14 May 1559, 454–455.

[118] *Beiträge zu den Sammlungen von Briefen Philipp Melanchthons*, Adalbert Horawitz, ed. (Vienna, 1874): 5 July 1556, 311. To the list of Old Testament kings Melanchthon added Constantine and Theodosius the Great.

[119] For the background to these events see V. Bibl, "Die Vorgeschichte der Religionskonzession Kaiser Maximilians II.," *Jahrbuch für Landeskunde von Niederösterreich* (1914/15): 400–431.

theologian David Chyträus.[120] The emperor believed that such a moderate commission would both lay the foundation of a well-ordered Protestant church and keep open the possibility of a future reunion with the Catholic communion.[121]

Maximilian endeavored to maintain a peaceful coexistence between Protestants and Catholics in the empire through modest but substantial measures. Largely through the emperor's influence, Lutherans were allowed to both study and teach at the university in Vienna. Ferdinand had decreed that all professors and students had to submit a written profession of faith which proclaimed allegiance to the church of Rome. Maximilian helped modify this arrangement. A proclamation was issued in 1568 that no longer mandated loyalty to the *romanae fidei*.[122] Maximilian also spearheaded a movement to reform Austria's monasteries. He set up a committee in 1568 to supervise a visitation of the archduchy's cloisters. The findings were disturbing. Funds had been misappropriated, and ecclesiastical discipline was lacking. Responding quickly to this crisis, the emperor dealt directly with the most serious abuses.[123]

During the last months of his father's reign Maximilian and Ferdinand sponsored a conference that examined a major issue of the Catholic reform party in Vienna, the lay use of the chalice in the Eucharist.[124] At the same time, the Flemish theologian George Cassander was invited to the imperial court.[125] Cassander was commissioned to analyze major points of contention between Protestants and Catholics. Due to ill health Cassander was not able to make

[120] Bibl, "Die Organisation des evangelischen Kirchenwesens im Erzherzogthum Oesterreich u.d. Enns von der Ertheilung der Religions-Concession bis zu Kaiser Maximilians II. Tode (1568–1576)," *Archiv für Österreichische Geschichte* 78 (1899): 134, 139. For a short biographical sketch on each of these figures, see the entries in *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* (Camerarius, vol. 3, 720–724; Carlowitz, vol. 3, 788–790; Chyträus, vol. 4, 254–256). Concerning Chyträus's contributions see J. Reitzes, *Zur Geschichte der Religiösen Wandlung Kaiser Maximilians II* (Leipzig, 1870), 17, 18.

Significantly it was through Crato's influence that Camerarius was named to the imperial commission. The two had become friends after the completion of Crato's studies in Wittenberg. Luther had advised Crato to travel to Leipzig to secure a preceptorial position. There he forged a lifelong friendship with Camerarius. Luther to Johann Hess, 20 July 1543, Wrocław University Library, manuscript division, microfilm R243, 123r.

[121] See Maximilian's comments to Cardinal Commendone. B. Raupach, *Evangelisches Oesterreich, das ist, Historische Nachricht von den vornehmsten Schicksalen der Evangelisch Lutherischen Kirchen in dem Ertz-Hertzogthum Oesterreich*, vol. 1 (Hamburg, 1732), 99, 100.

[122] Grete Mecenseffy, "Wien im Zeitalter der Reformation des 16. Jahrhunderts" in *Wien an der Schwelle der Neuzeit* (Vienna, 1974), 60.

[123] T. Wiedemann, *Geschichte der Reformation*, 2:195–208.

[124] Holtzmann, 520, 521.

[125] Maximilian to Cassander, 20 May 1564, printed in George Cassander and George Witzel, *De Sacris Nostri Temporis Controversiis Libri Duo* (Helmstadt, 1659), 2:199–200.

the journey. He remained in the Rhineland where he composed the treatise *De Articulis Religionis Inter Catholicos et Protestantes*, which was sent to Maximilian upon its completion.[126] Cassander offered a *via media* for Catholics and Protestants. For the Flemish theologian, the Reformation formula *sola fide* was insufficient. Every Christian had the responsibility to guard and preserve the peace and unity of Christ's visible body on earth, the Catholic church.[127] The Protestants had severed this bond unjustifiably. At the same time, however, the church had a duty to redress its failures. Cassander argued that its teaching should be simplified doctrinally. The pope should publicly sanction both clerical marriage and the lay use of the chalice.[128] Maximilian shared Cassander's views. In a letter to David Chyträus he earnestly acknowledged:

> God is my witness that no other matter is more dear to me, that I consider nothing else by day and night with more concern than how the grievous divisions and disputes can be overcome in order that the true teaching of the catholic and orthodox church flourish and spread everywhere, thus once more reestablishing the unity of the redeeming church.[129]

Culminating with Maximilian II, a spirit of religious conciliation did pervade the Hapsburg court in this period. Nonetheless, confessional tensions continued to rise during Maximilian's short twelve-year reign. The irenic ideal was ultimately doomed to fail. A host of factors contributed to its demise. The concluding section of this study will examine a final feature of Crato's career at the imperial court which helps explain the inherent weaknesses of irenicism and the consequent triumph of Counter-Reform Catholicism.

[126] *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*, vol. 4 (Munich, 1876), 60–61.

The work of George Witzel should also be considered in this context. Witzel wrote his *Via regia* at the request of Ferdinand I. This Erasmian treatise supported Ferdinand's policies of compromise. The actual manuscript was completed after Ferdinand's death and was then presented to Maximilian II. For more on Witzel, see Joseph Lecler, *Toleration and the Reformation* (New York, 1960), 1:269, 270.

[127] G. Cassander, *De Articulis Religionis Inter Catholicos et Protestantes,* in *De Sacris Nostri Temporis Controveriis Libri Duo* (Cologne, 1577), 2:186.

[128] John Patrick Dolan, *The Influence of Erasmus, Witzel and Cassander in the Church Ordinances and Reform Proposals of the United Duchees of Cleve during the Middle Decades of the 16th Century* (Münster, 1957), 88.

[129] Cited in F.W. Kantzenbach, *Das Ringen um die Einheit der Kirche im Jahrhundert der Reformation* (Stuttgart, 1957), 220.

III

The Imperial Funeral and the Failure of Irenicism

> Ten years ago he [Maximilian] said to the bishop of Olomouc, "No sin is more serious than the desire to tyrannize in matters of conscience."[130]
>
> –Johannis Crato

> Above all he defended our most sacred religion which is justice in God and the *proper worship* of Him.[131]
>
> –Bishop Lambert Gruter of Wiener Neustadt

While attending the Reichstag in Regensburg an ailing Maximilian died in the early hours of 12 October 1576. The religious strains in central Europe were reflected by a series of conflicting reports of the emperor's death. A papal observer confirmed that Maximilian died an orthodox Catholic while others maintained that the Hapsburg remained a crypto-Protestant to the end. Rival Protestant and Catholic accounts of Maximilian's final hours were circulated throughout the continent.[132] According to Stephen Gerlach, a Catholic theologian from Tübingen who had been the chaplain of an imperial embassy dispatched to Constantinople in 1573, two official funeral addresses were written in the emperor's honor. One was composed by Johannis Crato, while the other was drafted by Lambert Gruter, the bishop of Wiener Neustadt.[133]

[130] Johannis Crato, *Oratio Funebris de Divo Maximiliano Imperatore Caesare Augusto II*, Biiv.

[131] Lambert Gruter, *Funebris Oratio in luctuosam mortem sacratissimi potentissimique principis Maximiliani II* (Vienna, 1577), 8r. The italics are my own.

[132] M.A. Becker, "Maximilian II, die letzten Tage und der Tod," *Blätter des Vereines für Landeskunde von Niederösterreich* 11 (1877): 308–343; Hans Neufeld, "Studien zum Tode Maximilians II" (Ph.D. diss., Vienna, 1931), 60–62.

[133] *Stephan Gerlach dess Ältern Tage-Buch der von zween Glorwürdigen Romischen Kaysern, Maximiliano und Rudolpho*, Samuel Gerlach, ed. (Frankfurt, 1674), 355.

There were actually over a dozen orations written in Maximilian's honor. See Rosemarie Vocelka, "Die Begräbnisfeierlichkeiten für Kaiser Maximilian II," *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung* 84 (1976): 130–131.

The introductory citations from the two respective orations aptly capture the contrast between the irenic and Counter-Reform factions at the imperial court. The death of Maximilian II offered both parties an opportunity to express their vision of the dynasty and its role on the continent. By examining these two dissonant voices, we can more clearly see the antithesis between irenicism and its Counter-Reform rival. The events of 1576–1577 illustrate both the weakness of a Hapsburg *via media* and the appeal of a renewed and revitalized Catholic church.

Crato's Funeral Oration

After the emperor's death Crato returned home to Breslau, and there three months later he published his eulogy in Maximilian's honor. Dedicated to Maximilian's surviving sons, Crato's funeral oration was the irenic legacy he wished to bequeath to future Hapsburg generations.[134] The Silesian constructed his comments around Maximilian's humanist motto, "The Lord will provide." He noted that though Maximilian could not completely control political developments in the empire, he could direct his own life in the light of God's providence.[135] The empire was a political and religious tinderbox. Throughout his reign Maximilian feared "the brutality of a dreadful storm," an outbreak in hostilities surpassing the fury of the Dutch revolt and the French civil wars.[136] Maximilian realized that the empire's loose confederation and the freedom of its princes contributed to its volatility. The emperor concurred with Lucan's aphorism, "Liberty is destroyed by liberty."[137]

In response to the dangerous extremes that threatened his sovereignty, Maximilian carefully followed the classical ideal of moderation.[138] According to Crato, the various factions and interest groups at the court could not control the emperor. When determining imperial policy, he consistently steered a middle course.[139] In a letter to Nicholas Rhediger, Crato reminded his young

[134] Crato, *Oratio Funebris*, Aiir-v. Crato concluded his address by urging Emperor Rudolf to accept his father's legacy of piety, moderation, and discretion (Eiiir).

[135] It was common practice for humanists to adopt a Latin motto or *symbolum* which best encapsulated their approach to life and learning. Commenting on the emperor's *symbolum*, Crato noted, "He [Maximilian] considered that there is a great variety of stratagems and actions in human life, and he acknowledged that no wisdom, prudence, powerful plans or present actions could be preferable [to divine providence]." Ibid., Aiiiiv.

[136] Ibid., Biiiiv.

[137] Ibid., Cir.

[138] Again the doctor linked Maximilian's behavior to his belief in divine providence. "Truly these many virtues flowed from one source, a firm conviction concerning divine providence." Ibid., Cir.

[139] Ibid., Civ.

protégé to be wary of "Spanish pride." He argued that the aggressive foreign policy of Maximilian's cousin, King Philip II of Spain, heightened confessional tensions. Unequivocal Austrian support of the Spanish Hapsburgs could lead to a continental firestorm between Protestants and Catholics.[140] But unlike the Spanish monarch, Maximilian was adroit and politic when adjudicating religious disputes between the two parties. In his oration Crato referred specifically to the 1568 imperial settlement with the Lutheran estates of Lower Austria. Maximilian initially tried to calm this religious rivalry that had been stirred up "by enraged minds and inflamed desires." Only when informal compromise and accommodation failed did he give in to the demands of the Protestants.[141]

Two years before, Crato had written an introduction to the *Historia Bohemica* of Bishop Johannis Dubravius. Like the funeral oration, this brief foreword was dedicated to Maximilian's children, Ernst and Rudolf. In it he called the young archdukes to study the past in order to govern wisely in the future.[142] Though fate had decreed that Maximilian's reign would be marred by "the fury of war and religion," they should remain undeterred and follow the example of their father who governed with "most moderate moderation."[143] In the funeral oration the doctor developed this theme further. For Crato, the ultimate mission of the Hapsburg house was to preserve the fragile alliance of Christian Europe and lead this international coalition against the Ottoman invader. Maximilian shared this vision. From the Low Countries to Poland, the emperor actively labored for peace.[144] Concerning Maximilian's bid for the vacant Polish throne in 1572 Crato commented:

> I need not add how the most holy emperor governed many years ago when he saw the whole welfare of the Christian republic threatened. He labored for the acquisition of Poland not so much for his own purpose, since he had no great desire to rule the Poles, but for the sake of Christendom whose borders he would extend. He was eager by friendly agreement to unite the souls of Christians. But the fatal blindness of certain men who did not perceive the Turkish yoke which had been imposed upon them prevented this from happening.[145]

[140] See Crato's 1575 letter to Nicholas Rhediger. Wrocław University Library, manuscript division, microfilm 8894, 113r.

[141] Crato, *Oratio Funebris*, Biiiir.

[142] J. Dubravius, *Historia Bohemica* (Frankfurt, 1687), 7.

[143] Ibid., 20.

[144] Crato, *Oratio Funebris*, Ciiiiv.

[145] Ibid., Diir.

In the end, the emperor's bold attempt to hold the Christian continent together failed. Europe remained divided and intent on its own cannibalization. While the Turks were capturing the Serbian capital of Belgrade, Valois forces were leading an eager assault on the Italian peninsula.[146]

According to Crato, Maximilian's private behavior also reflected the ideal of moderation. Any display of regal ostentation distressed the emperor. He shunned lavish banquets and rarely spent more than an hour at the meal table. In dress his tastes were modest if not severe.[147] The emperor's religious convictions as well were marked by a simple and sincere piety.[148] Concerning his patron's lifestyle, Crato remarked, "He directed his whole life with a degree of moderation rare for individuals who are placed in any position of dignity."[149] Guided by such a mild and temperate spirit, Maximilian concluded that the forceful imposition of religious uniformity was morally unjustifiable. Those who pursued such a course "invaded the arch of heaven," arrogating to themselves a power reserved for God alone.[150] For Maximilian it was at this point that personal piety became public policy. Presiding over the Peace of Augsburg, Ferdinand had initiated the process of religious accommodation. The son followed in his father's footsteps as he sought to preserve the unity and integrity of the empire through compromise.[151]

In his portrayal of Maximilian, Crato studiously avoided partisan and polemical rhetoric. He described an emperor who refused to be drawn into confessional disputes and reported that in his free time Maximilian would read the church fathers to understand "the teaching of the pure and early Catholic church."[152] It was these precepts that constituted the emperor's personal creed. Perhaps the most significant feature of Crato's composition, however, was his treatment of Maximilian's death. He related that in Maximilian's last hour Bishop Gruter entered the imperial chamber for a final interview with the emperor. The interchange that Crato recorded was remarkably free of confessional tension. In Gruter's presence the emperor affirmed a simple, catholic statement of faith impartial to the extremes of Rome, Wittenberg, and

[146] Ibid., Ciiiiv.

[147] Ibid., Diiv.

[148] Ibid., Aiiiir. Also illustrative is a recently discovered prayer book that Maximilian used. This simple and unadorned volume reflects the emperor's pious and almost ascetic temperament. Otto Mazal, "Ein Gebetbuch Kaiser Maximilians II in der Herzog-August-Bibliothek" in *Miscellanea Codicologica* (Ghent, 1979), 529–534.

[149] Crato, *Oratio Funebris*, Diiv.

[150] Ibid., Biiv.

[151] Ibid., Biiv.

[152] Ibid., Biiv–Biiir.

Geneva.[153] Sixteen years earlier Maximilian in his meeting with Cardinal Hosius had stated that he was neither a Catholic nor a Lutheran but a Christian.[154] Crato confirmed this same sentiment in his account of Maximilian's passing.

There are several important points that need to be noted concerning this funeral address. In contrast to Bishop Gruter, who used the press of Stephen Creuzer in Vienna, Crato published his oration in Breslau far from the imperial court. Since he had not accompanied Maximilian on his fateful trip to the Reichstag at Regensburg, he was summoned to minister to the dying emperor only in the final days. His rivals at court were later to censure his treatment of Maximilian's last ailment.[155] These facts suggest that Crato's influence at court had already been undermined, and it is clear that the irenic faction of Vienna had little control over the official ceremonies surrounding the emperor's death.[156] An imperial funeral was a critical dynastic event, and it was during these ritual moments of great consequence that the church played a decisive role.

Gruter's Funeral Oration

In a comparison of the two funeral addresses, context is as important as content. Crato's speech was never presented publicly.[157] Composed in the quiet and peace of his Silesian retreat, the doctor's eulogy was a humanist encomium of the deceased emperor. Gruter's oration, on the other hand, was a small but critical part of a complex ecclesiastical rite. Delivered as a homily, the bishop's address was the climax of an opulent and elaborate funeral ritual. The oration and attendant ceremonies were designed to convey a Catholic and conservative image of the Austrian Hapsburgs.

[153] "Intromissus igitur ad Caesarem D. Lambertus Gruterus Ecclesiastes Aulicus & Episcopus Neapolitanus, ut de Christi merito & satisfactione, quae nostra est Iustitia, quae peccata morte Filii Dei teguntur, aeterna poena propter Christi sanguinem innocentem pro nobis nocentibus asserendis fusum, remittitur; salus denique & vita aeterna nostra culpa amissa, per Christum unicum Deprecatorem & Messiam nostrum restituitur; tantum ut loqueretur, nec quicquam aliud admisceret, Imperator voluit." Ibid., Eiir–v.

[154] Supra, fn. 9.

[155] Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, CVP 11049, 1r–12r; *Abrahami Ortellii Epistolae*, 5 June 1575, #58, 131–132.

[156] Vocelka, 107. It should also be noted that Crato composed the oration in a period of difficult personal circumstances. His health had been poor, and his only son had been seriously sick in the months before the emperor's death. Crato, *Epistola ad Ioannem Sambucem de Morte Imperatoris Maximiliani Secundi* (Jena, 1781), 13.

[157] Harald Zimmermann, "Cratos Leichenrede auf Kaiser Maximilian II," *Heilmittelwerke Jahrbuch* (1958): 71.

Maximilian had arrived in Regensburg in early summer 1576 to preside over a Reichstag that began after a short delay on July 24. He had become seriously ill in the middle of September. Julius Alexandrinus, one of his physicians, arrived from Trent at the end of the month to attend him, but Maximilian's condition continued to deteriorate.[158] Even Crato's last minute appearance could not save him. The emperor died on the morning of October 12. The body was prepared for burial the following day, but for three weeks the emperor lay in state in St. Michael's chapel. On November 6 the official funeral observances began.[159]

Through elaborate funeral rites the church reclaimed in death a man whom they could not control in life. The ceremonies started early on the sixth with a solemn but magnificently staged procession that transported the imperial bier from St. Michael's chapel to the cathedral. Members of the Hapsburg family along with the empire's principal nobility led the procession. Following close behind were the civil, military, and religious leaders of the city. In the cathedral the emperor's coffin was placed on a catafalque surrounded by candles. A mass for the dead was sung at vespers. The highlight of the ceremonies came the following morning when the new emperor and his entire court were assembled at the cathedral for Bishop Gruter's oration.[160]

Born in the Low Countries, Lambert Gruter studied at the Catholic university in Cologne, where he distinguished himself by his elocution and erudition.[161] In 1569 he was called to Vienna and appointed one of Maximilian's court preachers. He accompanied the emperor to the 1570 Reichstag in Speyer and two years later was named bishop of Wiener Neustadt. The enthusiastic bishop led an energetic reform of his diocese and quickly became a favorite of the Catholic faction at the imperial court. As Maximilian's official confessor, he was a natural choice to deliver the eulogy at Regensburg.

According to the papal nuncio, Giovanni Delfino, Gruter divided his comments in two sections: praise for the deceased emperor and a polemical de-

[158] The fact that Alexandrinus, a Catholic, was called to Regensburg before Crato supports the theory that the Catholic faction at court had some success keeping Crato away from the emperor. For more on Alexandrinus, see J.R. Aschbach, *Die Wiener Universität und Ihre Gelehrten* (Vienna, 1888), 343–347.

[159] According to Hubert Languet the delay between Maximilian's death and his funeral was caused by the lack of money for the appropriate ceremonies. Neufeld, 46.

In general for Hapsburg funerals, see Michael Brix, "Trauergerüste für die Habsburger in Wien," *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte* 26 (1973): 208–265. For Maximilian in particular, see Vocelka.

[160] Neufeld, 46–48.

[161] For Gruter, see the short biographical sketch by Theodor Wiedemann, "Lambertus Gruter," *Österreichische Vierteljahrschrift für Katholische Theologie* 7 (1868): 241–262.

fense of the Catholic church and its practices.[162] He began his remarks, however, with two classical allusions–first to Constantine, Christianity's first imperial convert, who "left behind for future princes that noble and valuable heritage of faith," and second to Ambrose, the fourth-century bishop of Milan, who had composed funeral addresses for Emperors Valentinian II and Theodosius the Great.[163] Styling his own remarks after Ambrose's orations, Gruter saw himself continuing this unbroken tradition that linked the imperial house with the Catholic church.

The bishop introduced the main part of his address with a spirited defense of Catholic funeral rites which Protestants "ridicule and damn as useless, ineffective and superstitious."[164] Gruter argued that these ceremonies were an appropriate way to honor Maximilian's memory. Since the death of Constantine, the church had always commemorated the passing of a Christian emperor in a similar fashion. Through the funerary ritual the Hapsburg subject expressed his love, loyalty, and gratitude to the deceased sovereign.[165] Gruter's implications were clear. The entire ceremony was a benchmark by which one could judge allegiance to the dynasty. If the Protestants could not affirm these rites, they proved their ingratitude if not their infidelity.

Gruter laced his entire oration with barbs against the Protestants. He noted that Arius, the fourth-century presbyter of Alexandria, was the first who "dared to teach against the agreement of all antiquity."[166] The Protestants were but the latest in a long list of heretics who rebelled against the church's authority. In contrast, Maximilian fought valiantly for the cause of true religion. Leading an international coalition against the Turks, Christendom's most dangerous enemy, he was a modern-day Hercules who sallied forth against a monster more deadly than the nine-headed hydra of mythology.[167]

Through a careful selection of facts, Gruter portrayed Maximilian as a stalwart defender of Catholic orthodoxy. He described Maximilian's bravery thwarting the dangerous Grumbach conspiracy which threatened "the laws, liberty and religion of the Empire."[168] According to Gruter, Maximilian real-

[162] Neufeld, 48.

[163] Gruter, *Funebris Oratio* 2r, 3r. Gruter's oration was delivered originally in German. The Latin version appeared in print the same year in Vienna. For Ambrose's two orations, see *The Fathers of the Church*, R.J. Deferrari, ed. (Washington D.C., 1953), 22:263–332.

[164] Gruter, 4r.

[165] Ibid., 4v, 5r.

[166] Ibid., 17r.

[167] Ibid., 9r.

[168] Ibid., 7r. The swashbuckling knight Wilhelm von Grumbach instigated a rebellion in Saxony in 1566. Grumbach was captured, tortured, and publicly executed in 1567. See F.X. von Wegele, "Wilhelm von Grumbach (1503–1567)" in *F.X. von Wegele, Vorträge und Abhandlungen*, (Leipzig, 1898), 173–191.

ized that Catholicism was the empire's true foundation, for he recognized Christian piety as "the strongest cord of human society."[169] Though Maximilian faced great difficulty, he diligently worked for the peaceful reestablishment of Catholic orthodoxy.[170] The emperor's personal life also reflected these same godly virtues. He married a pious Spanish wife who ensured that his sons and daughters were raised devout Catholics.[171] Maximilian lived a worthy life, and when the emperor finally breathed his last, he died a loyal son of Rome.[172]

Conclusion

These two funeral orations are representative of two larger cultural phenomena. In Crato's address we encounter the irenic world of late humanism. Bishop Gruter, on the other hand, introduces us to the era of the early Catholic baroque. At Maximilian's funeral these two cultures met. It was the baroque that would finally emerge triumphant at the Hapsburg court. When we consider the conflict between these two cultures in the specific context of Maximilian's death, we can point to three major reasons that not only help explain the greater appeal of the baroque commemoration of the emperor's passing but also provide a more general explanation of the failure of irenicism.

In an age of religious polarization it was difficult to preserve the memory of a moderate emperor. Maximilian's credal convictions were confessionally ambiguous. He never became a Protestant, but there were many who doubted the sincerity of his Catholic profession. He awkwardly straddled both camps and was not completely trusted by either side. The actions of the archbishop of Salzburg illustrate how this ambiguity could undermine imperial authority. To expose the emperor's Protestant sympathies the archbishop sent Maximilian's brother-in-law, Duke Albert of Bavaria, a hymn book from Wittenberg dedicated to the emperor in 1571.[173] George Eder, a professor at the university in Vienna and an indefatigable opponent of irenicism, clearly perceived the problem of the Hapsburg *via media* by noting, "They [the irenicists] are neither hot nor cold but try to wear two shoes on the same foot. They will therefore be justifiably spat out and cast off by both [Catholic and

[169] Gruter, *Funebris Oratio*, 7v.

[170] Ibid., 8r.

[171] Ibid., 6r–v.

[172] Ibid., 11v–12r. Concerning Maximilian's death, Gruter also cited the Apocalypse of St. John. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord . . . They will rest in their labor for their deeds will follow them." Revelation 14:13.

[173] Carl Haupt, *Melanchthon und seiner Einfluss auf Maximilian II* (Wittenberg, 1897), 57–58.

Lutheran] parties."[174] Crato's portrayal of Maximilian as a confessionally neutral sovereign ran counter to the popular current of the day. The undeniably partisan image offered by Gruter more closely matched the prevailing mood of the period.

The second point directly addresses the issue of audience. Crato's oration did earn high praise from a select group, both Catholic and Protestant. Hugo Blotius, the first imperial librarian, requested a copy of the eulogy for the collection and commended the Silesian's address as a model for future generations.[175] The Hungarian polymath, Johannis Sambucus, also spoke highly of the oration.[176] But the world of irenicism, with its emphasis on intellectual abstraction, had a limited audience. The *politique* ideal of Hapsburg Vienna most often expressed itself through the rarified media of the learned scholar. Jacopo Strada, Maximilian's chief artistic advisor, communicated the ideals of irenicism through his art; Sambucus used the emblem book; Lazarus von Schwendi, a former commander-in-chief of the imperial forces, wrote the emperor long and often times unread petitions urging religious toleration; and in this case Crato, the Christian humanist, composed an eloquent encomium which had a limited audience.[177] Austrian irenicism was an elite movement. Its message was never successfully communicated to the broader populace.

This observation brings us to our third and final point. The baroque ceremonies surrounding Maximilian's death captured the interest of an audience far larger than the group that applauded Crato. It is evident that Bishop Gruter understood the importance of crafting an appealing program around the funeral rites. Indeed, apart from his obligatory celebration of Maximilian's reign, the most prominent feature of his eulogy is his fiery defense of the elaborate ecclesiastical proceedings that were honoring the emperor's memory. It is also significant that he delivered his homily in German, the native tongue of most present in the cathedral. It was only later that the oration was translated and published in Latin.[178]

The observances in Regensburg were only the beginning of the funeral ceremonies honoring Maximilian. Despite the emperor's wish to be buried in

[174] In this context he was citing Revelation 3:16. George Eder, *Evangelische Inquisition: Wahrer und falscher Religion* (Dillingen, 1573), 72r.

[175] Blotius to Crato, 23 January 1577, Wrocław University Library, manuscript division, microfilm R248, 155r.

[176] See the three letters Sambucus wrote Crato in 1577. Reproduced in H. Gerstinger, *Die Briefe des Johannes Sambucus 1554–1584* (Vienna, 1968), 210–211; 218–219; 219–221.

[177] For a survery of these irenic projects at the imperial court, see Howard Louthan, "A *via media* in Central Europe: Irenicism in Habsburg Vienna" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1994).

[178] Neufeld, 48.

Vienna, Rudolf decided to have his father interred in Prague. Elaborate preparations were made to convey the emperor's remains to the Bohemian capital, and the procession was marked with great pomp and celebration. In January a ship brought the imperial bier down the Danube to Linz. From there the coffin was transported overland to Prague. Memorial services were observed in each village through which the convoy passed.[179] In Prague itself Hapsburg officials devoted great attention to the attendant ceremonies. Each detail was calculated to communicate an unequivocal message. The dramatics of a carefully orchestrated procession to St. Vitus cathedral, the ornate design of the *Castrum Doloris*, the popular distribution of coins commemorating the event, and a Jesuit theatrical production honoring Maximilian's passing were all part of a concerted effort to claim the emperor's memory for a revivified Catholic church.[180]

The play staged by the Jesuits in Prague foreshadowed a new type of court culture, one that would eventually eclipse the late humanist world of Vienna and Prague. The Society of Jesus understood the power and appeal of images.[181] The drama they presented at this occasion celebrated the apotheosis of Maximilian II. In death they invested the emperor with an authority he did not have in life. As Maximilian was led heavenward by the goddess Astraea, he bestowed his imperial blessing on the Counter-Reform policies of the new emperor.[182] This theatricality so thoroughly mastered by the Jesuits was the greatest strength of the baroque. While Crato's humanist encomium was appreciated by a select circle of scholars, Lambert Gruter's oration, firmly embedded in a series of elaborate rituals, targeted a larger audience. The broader popular appeal of the baroque would ultimately win the soul of central Europe.

[179] Vocelka, 114, 115.

[180] See Evans's comments regarding the design of the *Castrum Doloris*, the elaborate decorations that surrounded Maximilian's coffin. Evans, *Rudolf II and His World*, 61. For the actual procession to the cathedral, see Vocelka, 123–126.

[181] Manfred Fleischer has noted, "While Protestant Europe derived its literary and rationalistic heritage from a faith in a transcendent God who made his will known through Holy Writ, Catholic Europe communed with an incarnate God through the cosmic drama of the Mass. In keeping with this soteriology, the Jesuits proclaimed in and through their schools to the people of the world the redemptive conjunction of God and man in Christ by a special emphasis on drama." Manfred Fleischer, "Father Wolff: The Epitome of a Jesuit Courtier," *The Catholic Historical Review* 64 (1978): 591.

For a contemporary account of the effect of Jesuit theater at the Wittelsbach court in Munich, see Helmut Dotterweich, *Der junge Maximilian* (Munich, 1962), 74–75.

[182] *Nekysia* (Vienna, 1577), Eiir.

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